

Minutes from the WeCAN Meeting held at Westfield City Hall Assembly Room on
April 28, 2009 at 7 pm.

Disclaimer: I hope you will find these notes helpful. They are not a complete representation of the meeting, but rather the highlights of topics discussed. Feel free to contact me at Westfield City Services Building (317) 804-3002 if you have any questions. -TB

April 28, 2009

Agenda

- I. Opening Announcements
- II. Grand Junction Derby
- III. Future of Westfield Series
- IV. Networking
- V. Signs
- VI. Ending Announcements

I. Opening Announcements

The next WeCAN Meeting will be Tuesday, May 19.

Homeowner's Bill

The Homeowner's Bill was voted into the legislation. It does not affect any existing HOAs. It will affect those HOAs established after June 30, 2009. The burdens on HOAs originally stipulated in the bill were watered down thanks to the efforts of those, such as Jim Ake, who testified on behalf of HOAs and WeCAN. Thanks Jim!

Yard Waste Committee

There have been several calls to Customer Service regarding yard waste disposal. The residents have asked the City to investigate a solution. The City is fortunate to have some great residents volunteer to work with the City to look at the options. The WeCAN Yard Waste Committee is Jon Helms, Ron Rothrock, Jim Ake, Ted Englebrecht, and Susan Meagher.

II. Grand Junction Derby

Tom Smith introduced the Grand Junction Derby. It has turned into an uphill and downhill race. It will be held on Sunday, August 9, 2009. The time is yet to be determined. The derby is expected to start at Union and SR 32 and go past the bridge. Two people will be allowed to push the car uphill. There will be three classifications: Speed; Funkiest (creative themes); Children 3-5 years old (allowed to race anything-tricycle, power wheels)

The rules for building the car are that it has to have brakes and it has to fit in a 8 ft by 8ft by 8 ft cube.

In addition to the races, there will be a concert and the Lion's Club will be hosting a Chicken BBQ Meal.

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The participants will include City Departments, Police, Fire, Businesses, and Neighborhoods. Anyone is welcome to join in. Start figuring out who the engineers, builders, and pushers will be in your neighborhood! We would love to have the neighborhoods get involved and race against each other.

III. Future of Westfield Series (The concepts in the series are not intended to be detailed. Keep in mind that they are works in progress.)

John Rogers kicked off the Series by speaking about Geothermal Technology. He has been with the city for a year and is working on many exciting innovative solutions for cost efficiencies and sources of revenue. He has also worked actively in the Central Indiana Purchasing Alliance (CIPA), where public entities collaboratively purchase items at lower costs.

John is investigating the possibility of maximizing the existing water utility to offer geothermal technology to residents and businesses. The concept of geothermal technology is that heat and cooling is exchanged through the water. The system works best on well water that is at a consistent temperature, which we have. The furnaces in homes and businesses would need to be changed to a geothermal one. The cost would be approximately \$1,200-\$1,500 per unit. A heat pump with a backup system is also needed. With the neighborhoods banding together, there would be some discount on the price of the furnaces and heat pumps. In addition, there are several tax credits and deductions that should also be factored in the analysis. On average, people using the geothermal save 50% on their heating and cooling bills. A WeCAN member cited that a whole winter gas bill was just \$50.

In the near future, the City will test a geothermal system at the Public Works Facility. The process would be certified by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management to ensure that there will be no contamination of water. The next phases of implementation will then be to install in new residential or business areas, then retrofit existing structures.

Chicago currently has a fifteen acre lake that is being used in a geothermal system for a hospital. We don't have a lake but we do have large retention ponds that could possibly be used in a similar way. A good depth would be about fifteen feet.

Solar power is not yet affordable enough to implement on a small scale. Wind power may be a possibility but it would be an expensive undertaking.

An HOA concern with the geothermal system is that due to the design of some homes, the geothermal unit may need to be outside which may violate covenants.

IV. Networking

Shadow Lakes started off the discussion by speaking to the importance of having an association AND members to approve the budget. Without the authority to change financial aspects, the banks can end up controlling and taking a lot of fees out of the account.

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Setter's Run has about 300 homes. They have a website; contact list; activities committee; and even a Facebook page. They have about 90% but getting the other 10% has been difficult.

Small neighborhoods can band together to get some communications out to the residents.

Brookside has a push/pull communication. They have close to 100% readership. They do email blasts and keep their email list subscription up-to-date. They do print the newsletter as a hardcopy because the whole family can read the newsletter as opposed to just the person who receives the email.

Village Farms, Centennial, and some other neighborhoods use Capture Media. They take care of the printing/ mailing costs by getting advertising. The criteria may have changed but it was: minimum of 200-250 homes; and average value of homes in the neighborhood greater than \$250,000. Contact Kathy Milkey at 850-0968 to see if your neighborhood (or maybe a few neighborhoods) could get a Community Newsletter through Capture Media as well.

Pine Ridge/Quail Ridge used to go door to door to get news out. Starting May 1, a management company is going to build them a website and newsletter. They will also give out magnets with the website address and important phone numbers. They have found that putting the possibility of raising dues on the agenda, more people turn out.

Coverdale and Village Farms are also going to have sweeping changes with a property management company taking on financials instead of the board members. They have seen less people volunteering and turnout to meetings declining.

Village Farms has put their ballots online with one password per household. They also offer paper copies. They received about 200/770. About 90% had registered online. It was mentioned that when a resident complains to the board, the board member should offer the open spot on the board to the resident-the resident almost always declines. Also, putting a 2 hour time limit on the board meetings might get more people to join.

Sandpiper Lakes did not find that switching over to a property management company increased the attendance of meetings.

Everyone at the WeCAN meetings are public servants. They like making changes for the better. About 20% of the people in any organization do all the work.

It was also suggested that more publicity should be done on WeCAN to make residents more responsive to reporting back to their WeCAN representative and then to the group. The City will look into making that happen.

A last comment was made to stay away from yahoo newsgroups!

Mayor Andy Cook spoke about where we were a little over a year ago with no real communication, no Westfield newspapers, no WeCAN. Now we have the Westfield Star and

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Current in Westfield. WeCAN has been a valuable asset in changing how the residents and government can work together through communication to reach common goals. WeCAN is still going strong one year and one month later. Mayor Cook is proud that the attendance and participation has been gaining momentum over time and hopes to see more neighborhoods participate in the future.

Mayor Cook also mentioned the conceptual plans for the Sports Complex and the Family Sports Capital of America. A commission similar to the Grand Junction Task Group will be set up to determine feasibility of the Sports Complex plan. The hard economic times are actually the best time to plan development as the economy will get better and when it does, Westfield will be ready. The Complex is planned to be about 200 acres along town road from 146th St to 161st Street. The trail system would run through the complex. Mayor Cook would love to see some sort of transportation that runs downtown. The complex will also help make Hamilton County a destination.

V. Signs

The Westfield City Council has recently been tasked with looking at signs throughout Westfield. Which signs should be allowed, which shouldn't, what types of signs should require a permit, which shouldn't? Noblesville doesn't allow signs in the right of way at all. Fishers allows directional signs Friday through Monday. Permits currently are required for Open House signs at \$5. Some neighborhoods have covenants that already prohibit signs in the right of way. The common solutions WeCAN proposed were setting a timeframe for temporary signs and nothing permanent. Open Houses, Garage Sales, and other temporary events would fall under the temporary signs category. Political signs are not allowed in the right of way and do not require a permit. The enforcement of signs will be heavily self-policed. Please call Community Development at 804-3170, even on the weekend. The code-enforcement officer randomly works on the weekend so if you have a call in and he is working, he will address the sign violation. The Community Development Department relies on complaints from those that notice the same garage sale sign going up every week. Also, if real estate signs are up after the designated time period determined, it was suggested that the broker be called and even fined. There is an ordinance that protects signs from blocking the line of sight. If you see a sign that does not meet the requirements, please let Community Development know. Handheld signs do violate the ordinance that prohibits signs from moving.

VI. Ending Announcements

Volunteers Needed!! - Westfield Ready - Saturday, June 13th - Mock Emergency

The city of Westfield's Fire Department and Police Department are working in conjunction with the Hamilton County Health Department to have an exercise to test a section of the "Westfield Ready" program. 'Westfield Ready' is a citywide disaster plan outlining steps for the city to take in the event of an emergency. This plan is one of the first in the country to have community involvement by including CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and Westfield is 1st to integrate their community plan with the Health Department. This emergency preparedness

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exercise is being conducted in order to improve both agency and county capacity to respond to a large-scale public health emergency in accordance with county, state and federal protocols.

The exercise will be held June 13, 2009 and we would like to get about 250 volunteers to commit several hours during the hours of 8 am to 2 pm that day. The exercise will start for the volunteers at the Sales Office in Centennial South where you will get instructions on what your role will be during the exercise. From there you will be taken by bus to another location where the Health Department will establish a mobile Point of Dispensing (POD) facility. And then returned by bus back to the Sales Office. This will give you an opportunity to get insight into what you might have to go thru in the case of an emergency. This will also give you the opportunity to see and help Police, Fire and Cert teams training to help Westfield in an emergency.

Please send your name, telephone number and contact email address to ron.rothrock@gotown.net. We will be contacting you with more information. If you have or know of someone with mobility issues (scooter, crutches, etc), we would love to have you help us make this exercise as real as possible.

Web Updates – Road Construction

From the homepage, you can click on [Current Road Improvement Updates](#) to see information about current and upcoming construction projects.

Next month, on May 19th, a representative from Public Works will discuss current and future road projects.

If you have questions/suggestions, please email Tammy at tblackburn@westfield.in.gov.
Thank you!